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SUBJECT: EU CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SPACE OBJECTS PROPOSED

¶11. (U) Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Security and Disarmament Division representatives passed us a draft Code of Conduct for Space Objects, on which the EU has been working for several months. The draft paper covers activities to avoid collisions and deliberate explosions, to develop safer traffic management practices, to provide reassurance through improved information exchanges, and to adopt more stringent space debris mitigation measures.

¶12. (U) The MFA interlocutors noted that, while this is being developed as an EU Code of Conduct, it would be available to all states to join. For this reason, they hope to engage spacefaring nations such as the U.S., Russia, and China to incorporate their views. On that note, they informed us that the EU would convene a working group of experts in early November to expand upon the principles reflected in the draft paper. For this reason, the Portuguese would appreciate USG comments on the draft paper by October 31.

¶13. (SBU) According to the Portuguese, the issue is being handled by the Working Group on Global Arms Control (CODUN), but expects the ad hoc experts group to develop the full proposal. The EU, noted our interlocutor, has also established an e-gateway to further engage member governments. The Portuguese also noted that EU consensus has not yet been reached as France is still weighing its own domestic policies in regard to its goals in space.

¶14. (U) The draft paper was forwarded to EUR/WE and other offices by e-mail on October 9. Should any recipients of this message wish to review the draft Code of Conduct, please contact EUR/WE Kevin Opstrup (opstrupkr@state.gov) or Embassy Lisbon's Troy Fitrell (fitrelltd@state.gov).
Hoffman